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ART. I.—*Life of Schiller.*

The Life of Friedrich Schiller. Comprehending an Examination of his Works. From the London Edition. Boston. 1833.

POETS are the priests of nature, endowed at birth with the pre-eminent qualities requisite for this high function. The power, too, thus bestowed on them, unlike other human possessions, is as well secured from the detractions of envy, by the pleasure which its exercise diffuses, as it is from attack by its unquestionable supremacy. The poet speaks to the heart, and ever in a voice of music, whether, like the nurse who lulls the crying infant with song, he mingle his soothing notes with the plaints of wo, or, like the spirit-stirring trumpet, quicken the pulse's wildest throbs. He communes with the inmost soul of man: he penetrates to the source of his feelings; he analyzes, he interprets, he anticipates, he reveals them. Yet his deep insight awakens no jealousy; for he derives it from sympathy, and he manifests it in forms of beauty.

It is an error of the half-knowledge drawn from superficial and partial appearances, to regard genius and common sense as incompatible. As much so are they as beauty is incompatible with strength, or uncomeliness of feature with gentleness of disposition. Genius is the original intensity of power in a mental faculty, whereby it performs its function with in-

stantaneous rapidity and unerring accuracy. Examples of musical and mathematical genius, familiar to all, distinctly illustrate the difference between genius and talent. To reach its end, genius performs the same operation that common intellect does ; but it darts from the beginning to the conclusion with such quickness, as to preclude itself from consciousness of progress, and to impress others,—as incapable of understanding the process as itself is of following it,—with the idea of supernatural power. When it shall be shown that the absence of all such intuitive capacity is attended by an extra-efficiency of common sense, it will be time enough to prove that its presence has no bearing upon that quality. Cases are abundant to show the entire independence of each on the other, without going into a theoretical demonstration of it, were that admissible here.

If our definition of genius be correct, it will lead us to understand the nature of poetry.

Poetical genius is the intense sensibility to the beautiful. As musical genius stands to musical talent, thus stands the poet in relation to the multitude of men. Susceptibility to beauty is a quality common to mankind : the degree in which it is possessed distinguishes the poet. Crowds listen with delight to the music of Mozart, and millions rejoice over Shakspeare, through the medium of the same faculties by which these great men, possessing them in higher degrees, excelled all others.

A word on the fine arts, before proceeding further in our attempt to obtain a clear idea of the poet. They might be called the poetical arts, for their essence is beauty ;—in it they have their being, and according to their power to awaken the susceptibility to the beautiful are they prized. Without a high degree of this susceptibility in himself, the architect sinks to the master-builder,—the musician is little more than the performer on a hand-organ. Even in the secondary branch of painting and sculpture,—the copying of the living countenance,—this quality must assist at the artist's labor ; and a portrait, that has not an ideal heightening, is a failure as a work of art. Herein it is, that the artist is different from and is raised above the artisan. He works with the same materials, and he needs the same knowledge of their relations and uses ; but he combines them for a different end, and, lifting himself above physical appliances, appeals to feelings, the gratification of which is as much a want of human nature as that of its daily desires,

and in the ministering to which he does service equally with the worker with rougher tools, though the results of his efforts be not of a utility so obvious and tangible. In him the poetical is superadded to the mechanical.

The range of the artist is limited by the gross nature of the materials and instruments with which he works: and thus, his place is below that of the poet. He can but embody a point in the sweep of passion; he illustrates a moment, while the poet develops a life: he presents but a single scene, or, at most, a succession of scenes; or when, as in music, he attempts a drama, it is but as an accompaniment, more like the rhythm of a poem than a poem itself, and comparatively equally evanescent. The poet for his instrument has language,—the messenger and mirror of the mind,—the body to the soul of thought, flexible and obedient to its infinite modes,—the faithful shadow that ever follows light,—the universal symbol among men. But, to body forth clearly with this powerful instrument, he must,—besides his poetical superiority, that is, his intenser susceptibility to beauty,—perceive more vividly and feel more acutely than common men. Then will his mind spontaneously pour out its materials, whether, according to original constitution, these be collected from external nature, or from the workings of passion, or from meditation; and each production will be distinguished from the most vigorous of the prosaic mind by the halo of beauty, as we see in pictures the infant head of our Saviour by the glory. The pleasure derived from rural occupations and scenes is universal; and yet there has been but one Thomson, to reproduce the impressions made by them in a picture as faithful as it is lovely. Thousands of travellers pass yearly over the field of Waterloo, along the Rhine, through Switzerland into Italy, reaping a rich enjoyment from the various attractions of these regions; but Childe Harold is, and ever will be, a *unique* work. The story of Macbeth lay among the traditions of Scotland, an unheeded instance of common guilt, till Shakspeare lifted it up, as the God of nature lifts up the common vapor of the earth to forge his thunderbolts.

The poet, then, must know much; through observation and study he must be rich in knowledge, and be skilled in the uses of it by action. He must feel strongly: and, through experience of the joys and afflictions of life, have learned the depths of the human heart. To think without having acted,

is but to dream. Merely to look at the workings of passion, is barren observation ; the shock from the battery must be felt as well as its coruscations be seen, in order to learn the force of electricity ;—the heart must meet other hearts through the medium of acts flowing from its own warmth, before the spark of knowledge and truth can be struck forth. In short, to give life and substance to his poetry, the poet must be and do as other men : the man is the basis of the poet.—‘ Who has so peered into and illumined Reality, even to the deepest valleys thereof, and even to the smallest worm in them, as the twin-stars of poetry, Homer and Shakspeare ? As plastic art ever works in the school of nature, so have the richest poets ever been the most devoted and industrious children, laboring to hand over to other children the picture of mother Nature with new traits of likeness. The poets of the ancients were men of business and warriors before they were singers ; and especially must the great Epic poets of all times have lustily worked at the helm on the ocean of life, before they took in their hands the pencil which traces the vessel’s course. Thus Camoens, Dante, Milton,—and only Klopstock is an exception, but more for the rule than against it. How were not Shakspeare, and, still more, Cervantes thoroughly penetrated and ploughed and furrowed by life, before in them the seed of their poetic Flora sprouted forth and grew up ! The poetic school in which Goethe took his first lessons was made up, according to his autobiography, of mechanics’ shops, painters’ studies, coronation halls, and of all busy fair-holding Frankfort.’*

In proportion, then, to the poet’s elevation among poets, will he be interesting as a man, and the history of his life be valuable ; and the general curiosity in regard to all that relates to a great poet, is evidence that public instinct knows his position, independently of the demonstration of it which the critic may be able to give. The appearance of a life of Schiller, therefore, will doubtless excite in the reading world an anticipation of lively pleasure ; and such anticipation the work at the head of this article will fully meet. It is a reprint of a work lately published in England. The author is not named in the title. Whoever he may be, ‘ he discovers,’ to quote the language of Dr. Follen, in the Preface to the American

* Jean Paul Friedrich Richter’s *Vorschule der Aesthetik*.—Vol. I. § 2.

edition, 'a particular aptness for appreciating the characteristic excellence of Schiller.' For not only is he a fine critic and writer, and consequently capable of appreciating and describing Schiller; but he brings to his task that strong sympathy so essential to its well-performance,—a qualification in a critic, thus described by Goethe in one of his letters to Schiller:—'It seems to me that, as well in treating of writings as of deeds, unless one speaks with a loving sympathy, a certain partial enthusiasm, the result is so defective as to have very little value.'

Schiller,—whose name is now a sound of power in the world,—was born at Marbach, a small town of Würtemberg, on the 10th of November, 1759. His mother was exemplary as a mother and wife; and her taste and intelligence are said to have been superior to her education. It is worthy of note that she was fond of poetry. His father had been a surgeon and officer in the army, from which he retired soon after the birth of the poet, and held during the rest of his life an inconsiderable post under the King of Würtemberg. He is described as a clear-headed, upright, pious man, who used the leisure left by his occupations to cultivate himself by reading and study. These excellent persons, whose characters seem to have been blended in Schiller, and under whose benign influence he grew up, enjoyed the fortune of living to witness the greatness of their son; and we can believe, that filial gratitude and a just consciousness of his own worth suggested to the poet the following beautiful passage, which he makes Don Carlos address to his father Philip.

'How sweet and rapturous 'tis to feel
Ourselves exalted in a lovely soul,—
To know, our joys make glow another's cheek,
Our fears do tremble in another's heart,
Our sufferings bedew another's eye!
How beautiful and grand 'tis, hand in hand
With a dear son, to tread youth's rosy path,
Again to dream once more the dream of life!
How sweet and great, imperishable in
The virtue of a child, to live for ages,
Transmitting good unceasingly! How sweet
To plant what a dear son will one day reap,—
To gather what will make him rich,—to feel,
How deep will one day be his gratitude!'

Schiller was self-educated. Great men must ever be so. There is no teacher of the master-mind but itself. With its growth proceeds its education: self-culture is a necessity of its being. The mind that can be led and moulded has not the native vigor to attain pre-eminence; and when it has this vigor, to attempt to determine its direction is like attempting to mould the trunk of the young oak by enclosing it with boards, which, if they press it, are burst, and if they do not, are left entire around it, and are then entitled to as much credit for its form, as the instructor is for the results of the genius whose development he happened not to thwart. Therein alone can the teacher, into whose hands a young giant falls, show his wisdom, by perceiving his power and giving it scope. Far was Schiller from meeting with this appreciation: his powers were 'cabined, cribbed, confined' at school, particularly the one at which he was last and longest, 'to whose laws a disposition to poetry did violence,' and whose effect on him, Schiller in after life described, by calling *The Robbers* 'a monster, for which by good fortune the world has no original, and which I would not wish to be immortal, except to perpetuate an example of the offspring which Genius, in its unnatural union with Thralldom, may give to the world.' So that the *Carls-schule*, at Stuttgart, appears to have had the same kind of agency in making Schiller what he was, that the famous article in the *Edinburgh Review*, on the 'Hours of Idleness,' had in producing Byron.

There is a mixture of the comic and sublime in the picture of the youth Schiller, growing to manhood in the hands of the self-complacent pedagogues of the Duke of Würtemberg; and the appearance of *The Robbers*, as a consequence of their formal drilling, can be aptly likened to the explosion of a mass of gunpowder under the noses of some ignorant boys, drying it before the fire, to be used as common sand. The author of the 'Life of Schiller,' before us, has a fine passage on the effect produced by *The Robbers*. We extract it entire, and could wish that the principle set forth in the last paragraph were more generally understood.

'The publication of such a work as this naturally produced an extraordinary feeling in the literary world. Translations of the *Robbers* soon appeared in almost all the languages of Europe, and were read in all of them with a deep interest, compounded of admiration and aversion, according to the relative proportions of

sensibility and judgment in the various minds which contemplated the subject. In Germany, the enthusiasm which the *Robbers* excited was extreme. The young author had burst upon the world like a meteor ; and surprise, for a time, suspended the power of cool and rational criticism. In the ferment produced by the universal discussion of this single topic, the poet was magnified above his natural dimensions, great as they were : and though the general sentence was loudly in his favor, yet he found detractors as well as praisers, and both equally beyond the limits of moderation.

‘ One charge brought against him must have damped the joy of literary glory, and stung Schiller’s pure and virtuous mind more deeply than any other. He was accused of having injured the cause of morality by his work : of having set up to the impetuous and fiery temperament of youth a model of imitation, which the young were too likely to pursue with eagerness, and which could only lead them from the safe and beaten tracks of duty into error and destruction. It has even been stated, and often repeated since, that a practical exemplification of this doctrine occurred, about this time, in Germany. A young nobleman, it was said, of the fairest gifts and prospects, had cast away all these advantages ; betaken himself to the forests, and, copying Moor, had begun a course of active operations,—which, also copying Moor, but less willingly, he had ended by a shameful death.

‘ It can now be hardly necessary to contradict these theories ; or to show that none but a candidate for Bedlam as well as Tyburn could be seduced from the substantial comforts of existence, to seek destruction and disgrace, for the sake of such imaginary grandeur. The German nobleman of the fairest gifts and prospects turns out, on investigation, to have been a German blackguard, whom debauchery and riotous extravagance had reduced to want ; who took to the highway, when he could take to nothing else,—not allured by an ebullient enthusiasm, or any heroic and misdirected appetite for sublime actions, but driven by the more palpable stimulus of importunate duns, an empty purse, and five craving senses. Perhaps, in his later days, this philosopher *may* have referred to Schiller’s tragedy, as the source from which he drew his theory of life ; but if so, we believe he was mistaken. For characters like him, the great attraction was the charm of revelry, and the great restraint, the gallows,—before the period of Karl von Moor, just as they have been since, and will be to the end of time. Among motives like these, the influence of even the most malignant book could scarcely be discernible, and would be little detrimental, if it were.

‘ Nothing, at any rate, could be farther from Schiller’s intention than such a consummation. In his preface, he speaks of the moral effect of the *Robbers* in terms which do honor to his heart, while they show the inexperience of his head. Ridicule, he signifies, has long been tried against the wickedness of the times, whole cargoes of hellebore have been expended in vain ; and now, he thinks, recourse must be had to more pungent medicines. We may smile at the simplicity of this idea ; and safely conclude that, like other specifics, the present one would fail to produce a perceptible effect ; but Schiller’s vindication rests on higher grounds than these. His work has on the whole furnished nourishment to the more exalted powers of our nature ; the sentiments and images which he has shaped and uttered, tend, in spite of their alloy, to elevate the soul to a nobler pitch : and this is a sufficient defence. As to the danger of misapplying the inspiration he communicates, of forgetting the dictates of prudence in our zeal for the dictates of poetry, we have no great cause to fear it. Hitherto, at least, there has always been enough of dull reality, on every side of us, to abate such fervors in good time, and bring us back to the most sober level of prose, if not to sink us below it. We should thank the poet who performs such a service ; and forbear to inquire too rigidly whether there is any “ moral ” in his piece or not. The writer of a work, which interests and excites the spiritual feelings of men, has as little need to justify himself by showing how it exemplifies some wise saw or modern instance, as the doer of a generous action has to demonstrate its merit, by deducing it from the system of Shaftsbury, or Smith, or Paley, or whichever happens to be the favorite system for the age and place. The instructiveness of the one, and the virtue of the other, exist independently of all systems or saws, and in spite of all.’

Thus was Schiller’s entrance into manhood signaled. He postponed the publication of *The Robbers* until (after the conclusion of his college course) he had obtained the post of surgeon in the army, and he was just twenty-one when it appeared. With those in power in Würtemberg, *The Robbers* gained him no favor. To the Duke especially, it was doubly offensive : it was a manifestation of power and spirit in a subject, very unacceptable to a despotic sovereign, and it was a contumacious violation of the laws of taste, which called equally for the Duke’s condemnation. He ordered Schiller to abide by medical subjects. And as an earnest of his determination to enforce the order, and with his ducal power to crush the budding genius of the young poet, he had him put under arrest

for a week, for having gone secretly to Manheim to witness the performance of *The Robbers*. Schiller, however, went again; and learning that for this second transgression a much severer punishment awaited him, he resolved to free himself from the tyranny of the Duke, and to fly from his dominions. Accordingly, taking advantage of a day of bustle in Stuttgart, created by the arrival of some foreign Prince, he retired from the city, and passed beyond the frontier of Würtemberg. 'Empty in purse and hope,' he left his home. But, though hopeless and moneyless, he was not friendless. This can hardly be the lot of genius in Germany. Baron Dalberg, at that time superintendent of the theatre at Manheim, (in the Palatinate) who appreciated Schiller, and had brought *The Robbers* upon the stage, supplied him with money, while he lived under the name of Schmidt in a small town of Franconia; and soon after his flight from Stuttgart, Madam von Wollzogen, who admired the author of *The Robbers*, and knew Schiller's character through her sons, with whom he had been at school, invited him to her estate, near Meinungen. Under her hospitable roof, Schiller gave scope to the impulses of his genius, and within a year sent forth two more dramas, *Fiesco* and *Kabal und Liebe* (Court Intrigue and Love). The reputation of these enabled his friend Dalberg to have him appointed poet to the Manheim theatre, a post of respectability and reasonable profit. By this step his destiny was accomplished; by it he was placed in a position to devote himself to literature. Successfully had the inward strength of his inclinations struggled against outward difficulties, and opened to him the career which alone could satisfy himself, and in following which he was destined to shine, a light to the world. 'Something majestic,' said he at this period, 'hovers before me, as I determine now to wear no other fetters but the sentence of the world, to appeal to no other throne but the soul of man.'

The establishment of Schiller at Manheim, terminates the first era of his life. He was in his twenty-fourth year. In a short time he had experienced much. Strongly and variously had his heart been moved: duty and affection, the love of liberty and the calculation of its perils, fear and hope, had contended in his breast with the keenness exacted by the practical importance of the issue. He had felt the appalling reality of sudden self-dependence. These trials, too, had attested a boldness and energy in risking and resisting, pro-

portioned to the intellectual capacity in whose behalf they were exerted. He was thus well schooled for his vocation of painter and interpreter of the human heart : that this was the part allotted to him by nature, he had brilliantly shown. What he had already done was, however, only the evidence of a mighty power, and not the result of its full exertion ; the three works above named are the deep broad shadows that *Don Carlos*, *Wallenstein*, and *Tell* cast before them.

The author before us introduces the second part of the 'Life of Schiller' with comments on the condition of the *Man of Letters*, eloquently expressed, but only, we think, partially true. We doubt that men who devote themselves to Literature are burdened with more misery than their fellows. From two causes they *seem* to be so :—we seek to learn more of their lives than of those of any other class, and thence become acquainted with their particular portion of the common suffering of humanity ; and, secondly, our gratitude to them as benefactors or entertainers, sharpens our sympathy. But even if their pangs, from a deeper sensibility, be keener, so are their pleasures from the same cause. Not that we regard this as a solution of the question. Such a balancing of the account of life gives a very imperfect result ; and, indeed, would not only annihilate all gradation in human existence, but would level man, as to the quantum of happiness, to the degree of the brute animal, of whom it can with truth be said, that though the circle of his enjoyments is much narrower than that of man, he suffers proportionally less pain. This estimate of happiness is as fallacious as that of pecuniary profit, which should infer equality in the net gains of two merchants, because the income of each is to his outlay as five is to six, without looking to the difference in the amount of their respective capitals.

The elevated faculties of our nature are the only active capital, that is productive of substantial good ; and the proportion which they bear in making up the sum of a life, is the index of the happiness of each individual. Now, with those alone are hours of study occupied, and in such hours, the common cares and vexations and littlenesses of daily life are banished from the mind's presence ; nor is the pleasure enjoyed a mere momentary relaxation, such as superficial amusement gives to the work-worn body, but a strong, enduring, paramount gratification, which lightens all burdens, and miti-

gates the sting of every affliction. The solitary toil of the student feeds a flame, whose light tempers the darkness that gathers round the man. And this effect, strong when literary employment is merely passive, and the mind does no more than feed on the fruit of others' efforts, is far stronger when it labors actively, and reproduces the results of its observation and meditation, of experience and thought. The search of truth is the mind's noblest occupation,—the discovery, its grandest triumph. Obstacles and difficulties are elements of the pleasure of the search, as labor is of bodily well-being. And to the poet, who works in the richest field,—the human heart,—even the personal troubles and afflictions, that darken his individual path, are part of the material wherefrom is extracted the wisdom with which he lights and brightens the way of life to his fellows; just as the rugged rocks, shading with overhanging masses the bosom of the river that has forced its passage through them, are at once the constituents of its beauty and the evidence of its usefulness.

At the time when a new voice thus made itself heard in tones so deep and thrilling, German Literature had reached the maturity of its sudden growth. From various causes, this strong-minded people had remained without a literature until the middle of the eighteenth century. Before the Reformation there was no common dialect. Luther, whose gigantic mind made one of the greatest epochs in the history of man, made one too in the language of his country. The *High German* was gaining the ascendancy over the *Low German*, and Luther determined the conflict, by adopting it in his translation of the Bible. But although in this great literary masterpiece a perfect language was embodied, the religious disputes that engrossed Germany at this period, prevented the growth of elegant literature. Thus did Luther impede, for the time, that over which he was to exercise so vast and healthful an influence:—a proof of his mighty power. Then followed the 'thirty years' war,' which, besides distracting and impoverishing the German States, operated injuriously upon literature by the currency given through foreign soldiery to foreign languages and idioms. After it, came the French *mania*. The nobles spoke French and aped French manners. This influence extended into the eighteenth century, being supported not only, as is well known, by the Great Frederic, but by the writers who rose up at this time, endeavoring to

satisfy the long deferred want of a national literature; and who, though writing in Luther's German, imitated French models and were guided by French taste. Such were Opitz, Gottsched, Hagedorn, and others. But among them, and immediately following them, there appeared, almost simultaneously, a host of great original minds, who may be said to have suddenly created German literature:—Lessing, who first drew attention to Shakspeare, who was the master of the Schlegels, and may be called the father of philosophical criticism;—Klopstock, whose odes are as patriotic and national in character, as they are truly lyrical in tone:—the classical Wieland;—Herder, whom Jean Paul calls a Christian Plato;—and the greatest of all, Goethe, who, like Schiller, but ten years earlier than he, had swelled this grand concert of spirits with sounds of moan that went to the heart of Germany, and whose wild melody announced the master-spirit of the band.—We here beseech the reader not to impute to us a blind enthusiasm, because he has read a book entitled 'The Sorrows of Werther.' Goethe never wrote one with that title. He called his work, 'The sufferings of the young Werther:' the one known to the English reader, is a version of a French translation of that, and having undergone this double process of bad translation, (a good direct one, even, would be a difficult achievement,) is, we assure him, a very different thing from the original. Much it is to be regretted, that the opinion (if the vague idea excited by their names can be called such) entertained of these two great men by most readers in this country, should be drawn chiefly from the impression made by *The Robbers* and *Werther*, both produced when they were scarcely arrived at manhood, and both the result of that morbid, inflamed state of mind into which young genius will lash itself,—the wild cry of passion from deep souls full to suffocation, uttered without aim or knowledge, from the pressure of an inward burden.

Immediately after his settlement at Manheim, Schiller engaged actively in the discussions in which the awakened literary spirit of Germany was purifying and strengthening itself. He commenced the publication of a journal. In this, called the *Rheinische Thalia*, appeared the first three acts of *Don Carlos*, which added greatly to his reputation and gained for him the favor of the Grand Duke of Saxe Weimar, who afterwards proved so valuable a patron. Schiller soon grew dis-

contented with his situation at Manheim. The routine of theatrical supervision was not congenial to him. His salary was moderate; and his expanding mind longed for a wider field. At the expiration of eighteen months, he went to reside at Leipzig, and afterwards at Dresden. While at Manheim, he had formed an engagement with the daughter of one of his friends there, which was broken off by mutual consent. According to the account given in the 'Life,' this was a very unpoetical affair. He atoned for it, however, afterwards, and vindicated his claim to the poetic temperament, by going crazy for a while in consequence of the falsehood of a Dresden beauty. This form of homage to love seems to be a natural one for poets. Goethe, too, paid it, and his own sufferings supplied the materials for those of Werther. Byron's heart never healed of the wound inflicted by his first disappointment in love. Schiller's misery was, fortunately, confined to the poetry of courtship; the prose of matrimony was in his case smooth and bright.

While at Leipzig and Dresden, he continued the publication of the *Thalia*; wrote many of his smaller poems, the fragment of a novel called the *Geisterseher* (Ghostseer) and concluded *Don Carlos*, of which the writer of the 'Life' says:

'Schiller's *Carlos* is the first of his plays, that bears the stamp of any thing like full maturity. The opportunities he had enjoyed for extending his knowledge of men and things, the sedulous practice of the art of composition, the study of purer morals, had not been without their full effect. Increase of years had done something for him; diligence had done much more. The ebullience of youth is now chastened into the steadfast energy of manhood; the wild enthusiast, that spurned at the errors of the world, has now become the enlightened moralist, that laments their necessity, or endeavors to find out their remedy. A corresponding alteration is visible in the external form of the work, in its plot and diction. The plot is contrived with great ingenuity, embodying the result of much study, both dramatic and historical. The language is blank verse, not prose, as in the former works; it is more careful and regular, less ambitious in its object, but more certain of attaining it. Schiller's mind had now reached its full stature: he felt and thought more justly; he could better express what he felt and thought.'

The following extract presents to the reader a distinct picture of the state of Schiller's mind at this period.

‘ This tragedy of *Carlos* was received with immediate and universal approbation. In the closet and on the stage, it excited the warmest applauses equally among the learned and unlearned. Schiller’s expectations had not been so high; he knew both the excellencies and the faults of his work: but he had not anticipated that the former would be recognised so instantaneously. The pleasure of this new celebrity came upon him, therefore, heightened by surprise. Had dramatic eminence been his sole object, he might now have slackened his exertions; the public had already ranked him as the first of their writers in that favorite department. But this limited ambition was not his moving principle; nor was his mind of that sort for which rest is provided in this world. The primary disposition of his nature urged him to perpetual toil: the great aim of his life, the unfolding of his mental powers, was one of those which admit but a relative, not an absolute progress. New ideas of perfection arise as the former have been reached; the student is always attaining, never has attained.

‘ Schiller’s worldly circumstances, too, were of a kind well calculated to prevent excess of quietism. He was still drifting at large on the tide of life: he was crowned with laurels, but without a home. His heart, warm and affectionate, fitted to enjoy the domestic blessings which it longed for, was allowed to form no permanent attachment: he felt that he was unconnected, solitary in the world; cut off from the exercise of his kindlier sympathies; or if tasting such pleasures, it was “snatching them rather than partaking of them calmly.” The vulgar desire of wealth and station never entered his mind for an instant: but as years were added to his age, the delights of peace and continuous comfort were fast becoming more acceptable than any other; and he looked with anxiety to have a resting-place amid his wanderings, to be a man among his fellow men.

‘ For all these wishes, Schiller saw that the only chance of fulfilment depended on unwearied perseverance in his literary occupations. Yet though his activity was unabated, and the calls on it were increasing rather than diminished, its direction was gradually changing. The drama had long been stationary, and of late been falling in his estimation: the difficulties of the art, as he viewed it at present, had been overcome, and new conquests invited him in other quarters. The latter part of *Carlos* he had written as a task rather than a pleasure; he contemplated no farther undertaking connected with the Stage. For a time, indeed, he seems to have wavered among a multiplicity of enterprises; now solicited to this, and now to that, without being able to fix decidedly on any. The restless ardor of his mind is evinc-

ed by the number and variety of his attempts ; its fluctuation by the circumstance that all of them are either short in extent, or left in a state of fragments. Of the former kind are his lyrical productions, many of which were composed about this period, during intervals from more serious labors. The character of these performances is such as his former writings gave us reason to expect. With a deep insight into life, and a keen and comprehensive sympathy with its sorrows and enjoyments, there is combined that impetuosity of feeling, that pomp of thought and imagery which belong peculiarly to Schiller. If he had now left the Drama, it was clear that his mind was still overflowing with the elements of poetry ; dwelling among the grandest conceptions, and the boldest or finest emotions ; thinking intensely and profoundly, but decorating its thoughts with those graces, which other faculties than the understanding are required to afford them. With these smaller pieces, Schiller occupied himself at intervals of leisure throughout the remainder of his life. Some of them are to be classed among the most finished efforts of his genius. The *Walk*, the *Song of the Bell*, contain exquisite delineations of the fortunes and history of man ; his *Ritter von Toggenburg*, his *Cranes of Ibycus*, his *Hero and Leander*, are among the most poetical and moving ballads to be found in any language.'

He now turned his attention to history, and his aspiring mind formed several magnificent plans of historical works, too vast for execution. The results of his labor in this department of literature, although in extent falling far short of his original designs, are productions of the highest merit, combining with vivid gorgeous narrative, a deep philosophical spirit. *The Revolt of the Netherlands* (unfortunately a fragment) was the first. To this subject he was led by the investigations into the state of Spain under Philip II., which the composition of *Don Carlos* made necessary. We must here quote again from the eloquent writer of the 'Life.'

'Such were Schiller's occupations while at Dresden : their extent and variety are proof enough that idleness was not among his vices. It was, in truth, the opposite extreme, in which he erred. He wrote and thought with an impetuosity beyond what nature always could endure. His intolerance of interruptions first put him on the plan of studying by night ; an alluring but pernicious practice, which began at Dresden, and was never afterwards forsaken. His recreations breathed a similar spirit : he loved to be much alone, and strongly moved. The banks of the

Elbe were the favorite resort of his mornings : here, wandering in solitude amid groves and lawns, and green and beautiful places, he abandoned his mind to delicious musings ; watched the fitful current of his thoughts, as they came sweeping through his soul in their vague, fantastic, gorgeous forms ; pleased himself with the transient images of memory and hope ; or meditated on the cares and studies which had lately been employing, and were again soon to employ him. At times, he might be seen floating on the river in a gondola, feasting himself with the loveliness of earth and sky. He delighted most to be there, when tempests were abroad : his unquiet spirit found a solace in the expression of his own unrest on the face of Nature ; danger lent a charm to his situation ; he felt in harmony with the scene, when the rack was sweeping stormfully across the heavens, and the forests were sounding in the breeze, and the river was rolling its chafed waters into wild eddying heaps.

‘ Yet before the darkness summoned him exclusively to his tasks, Schiller commonly devoted a portion of his day to the pleasures of society. Could he have found enjoyment in the flatteries of admiring hospitality, his present fame would have procured them for him in abundance. But these things were not to Schiller’s taste. His opinion of the “flesh-flies” of Leipzig we have already seen ; he retained the same sentiments throughout all his life. The idea of being what we call a *lion* is offensive enough to any man, of not more than common vanity, or less than common understanding : it was doubly offensive to him. His pride and his modesty alike forbade it. The delicacy of his nature, aggravated into shyness by his education and his habits, rendered situations of display more than usually painful to him ; the *digito prætereuntium* was a sort of celebration he was far from coveting. In the circles of fashion, he appeared unwillingly, and seldom to advantage : their glitter and parade were foreign to his disposition : their strict ceremonial cramped the play of his mind. Hemmed in, as by invisible fences, among the intricate barriers of etiquette, so feeble, so inviolable, he felt constrained and helpless ; alternately chagrined and indignant. It was the giant among pigmies ; Gulliver, in Lilliput, tied down by a thousand packthreads. But there were more congenial minds, with whom he could associate ; more familiar scenes, in which he found the pleasures he was seeking. Here Schiller was himself ; frank, unembarrassed, pliant to the humor of the hour. His conversation was delightful, abounding at once in rare and simple charms. Besides the intellectual riches which it carried with it, there was that flow of kindliness and unaffected good humor, which can render dulness itself agreea-

ble. Schiller had many friends in Dresden, who loved him as a man, while they admired him as a writer. Their intercourse was of the kind he liked, sober, as well as free and mirthful. It was the careless, calm, honest effusion of his feelings that he wanted, not the noisy tumults and coarse delirium of dissipation. For this, under any of its forms, he at no time showed the smallest relish.²

In 1787, Schiller paid a visit to Weimar, the capital of literary Germany, where he was cordially welcomed, particularly by Herder and Wieland. 'You know the men,' he writes, 'of whom Germany is proud; a Herder, a Wieland, with their brethren; and one wall now encloses me and them. What excellencies are in Weimar! In this city, at least in this territory, I mean to settle for life, and at length once more to have a country.' While at Weimar, he received an invitation from his kind protectress, Madam von Wollzogen, to visit her. It was on occasion of this journey that he became acquainted, at Rudolstadt, with the Fräulein von Lengefeld, whose attractions brought him back to Rudolstadt the following spring. To this lady, who returned his love, and was worthy of it, he became engaged. His affectionate nature longed for domestic intercourse, and this union was destined to realize his anticipations of married life. He spent the summer at Rudolstadt, proceeding diligently and ardently in his literary labors. Here, for the first time, he met Goethe. The meeting, however, led to no intimacy. Soon after it, Schiller thus writes:

"On the whole, this personal meeting has not at all diminished the idea, great as it was, which I had previously formed of Goethe; but I doubt whether we shall ever come into any close communication with each other. Much that still interests me has already had its epoch with him. His whole nature is, from its very origin, otherwise constructed than mine; his world is not my world; our modes of conceiving things appear to be essentially different. From such a combination, no secure, substantial intimacy can result. Time will shew."

As little did Goethe feel attracted at that time towards Schiller. We refer the reader to the volume before us, for Goethe's interesting account of the state of his mind at that period. And yet, they did come together several years afterwards, and, contrary to Schiller's then anticipations, formed a 'secure and substantial intimacy,' which lasted and strengthened till the death of Schiller, which was, during ten years, the

chief source of pleasure and instruction to both, and which, in the annals of literature, exhibits a phenomenon as beautiful as it is rare. It was in 1787 that they first met, only, as it then seemed, to prove the impossibility of a close union between two such differently constituted natures; and in 1799 Goethe begins the six hundred and forty-fifth letter between them, in the following manner. He had just heard from Schiller of the illness of his wife. ‘Your letter, my dear friend, has given me a most painful surprise. My friendship for you is so strong, that I feel whatever happens to you as if it happened to myself.’ *

In 1789, being then in his thirtieth year, Schiller was appointed Professor of History at the University of Jena, in the Grand Duchy, and a few miles distant from the town of Weimar. Goethe, who appreciated Schiller’s genius, notwithstanding the indisposition he then felt to a closer intercourse, used his influence in procuring this post for him. Upon this he married; and here and at Weimar he spent the rest of his too short life.

With additional zeal he now devoted himself to the study of history, and in 1791 published his *History of the thirty years’ war*. Just at this time the philosophy of Kant spread itself over Germany like a thick vapor. In its course of mental purification, the universal German brain was undergoing the process of fumigation. Schiller, in whom the tendency to metaphysical abstraction was so strong, that, had he not been a poet, he probably would have been a metaphysician, became for a while a disciple of the Kantian doctrines. His was not a mind, however, to adopt a system; and he in a short time discovered, that he had not been so much enlightened as he at first supposed. The native soundness of his mind, supported by the influence of Goethe, soon dispelled this metaphysical illusion. The state of Germany, when the reign of Kant was at its height, is finely described by the anonymous author of the ‘Life of Schiller.’ We cannot resist the temptation to make a long extract.

‘The transcendental system of the Königsberg Professor had, for the last ten years, been spreading over Germany, which it had

* ‘Ihr Brief, werthester Freund, hat mich auf das unangenehmste überrascht. Unsere zustände sind so innig verwebt dass ich das was Ihnen begegnet an mir selbst fühle.’—*Briefwechsel zwischen Schiller und Goethe in den Jahren 1794 bis 1805.*

now filled with the most violent contentions. The powers and accomplishments of Kant were universally acknowledged; the high pretensions of his system, pretensions, it is true, such as had been a thousand times put forth, and a thousand times found wanting, still excited notice, when so backed by ability and reputation. The air of mysticism, connected with these doctrines, was attractive to the German mind, with which the vague and the vast are always pleasing qualities. The dreadful array of first principles, the forest huge of terminology and definitions, where the panting intellect of weaker men wanders as in pathless thickets, and at length sinks powerless to the earth, oppressed with fatigue, and suffocated with scholastic miasma, seemed sublime rather than appalling to the Germans; men who shrink not at toil, and to whom a certain degree of darkness appears a native element, essential for giving play to that deep meditative enthusiasm, which forms so important a feature in their character. Kant's Philosophy, accordingly, found numerous disciples, and possessed them with a zeal unexampled since the days of Pythagoras. This, in fact, resembled spiritual fanaticism rather than a calm ardor in the cause of science; Kant's warmest admirers seemed to regard him more in the light of a prophet, than of a mere earthly sage. Such admiration was of course opposed by corresponding censure; the transcendental neophytes had to encounter skeptical gainsayers as determined as themselves. Of this latter class the most remarkable were Herder and Wieland. Herder, then a clergyman of Weimar, seems never to have comprehended what he fought against so keenly; he denounced and condemned the Kantian metaphysics, because he found them heterodox. The young divines came back from the university of Jena with their minds well nigh delirious; full of strange doctrines, which they explained to the examiners of the Weimar Consistorium, in phrases that excited no idea in the heads of these reverend persons, but much horror in their hearts. Hence reprimands, and objurgations, and excessive bitterness between the applicants for ordination and those appointed to confer it; one young clergyman at Weimar shot himself on this account; heresy, and jarring, and unprofitable logic, were universal. Hence Herder's vehement attacks on this "pernicious quackery;" this delusive and destructive "system of words." Wieland strove against it for another reason. He had, all his life, been laboring to give currency among his countrymen to a species of diluted epicurism: to erect a certain smooth, and elegant, and very slender scheme of taste and morals, borrowed from our Shaftsbury and the French. All this feeble edifice the new doctrine was sweeping before it to utter ruin, with the vio-

lence of a tornado. It grieved Wieland to see the work of half a century destroyed ; he fondly imagined, that but for Kant's philosophy it might have been perennial. With skepticism quickened into action by such motives, Herder and he went forth as brother champions against the transcendental metaphysics ; they were not long without a multitude of hot assailants. The uproar produced among thinking men by the conflict, has scarcely been equalled in Germany since the days of Luther. Fields were fought, and victories lost and won ; nearly all the minds of the nation were, in secret or openly, arrayed on this side or on that. Goethe alone seemed altogether to retain his wonted composure ; he was clear for allowing the Kantian scheme to "have its day, as all things have." Goethe had already lived to see the wisdom of this sentiment, so characteristic of his genius and turn of thought.

‘ In these controversies, soon pushed beyond the bounds of temperate or wholesome discussion, Schiller took no part ; but the noise they made afforded him a fresh inducement to investigate a set of doctrines, so important in the general estimation. A system which promised, even with a very little plausibility, to accomplish all that Kant asserted his complete performance of ; to explain the difference between Matter and Spirit, to unravel the perplexities of Necessity and Free-will ; to show us the true grounds of our belief in God, and what hope nature gives us of the soul's immortality ; and thus at length, after a thousand failures, to interpret the enigma of our being,—hardly needed that additional inducement, to make such a man as Schiller grasp at it with eager curiosity. His progress also was facilitated by his present circumstances ; Jena had now become the chief well-spring of Kantian doctrine, a distinction or disgrace it has ever since continued to deserve. Reinhold, one of Kant's ablest followers, was at this time Schiller's fellow teacher and daily companion ; he did not fail to encourage and assist his friend in a path of study, which, as he believed, conducted to such glorious results. Under this tuition, Schiller was not long in discovering, that at least the "new philosophy was more poetical than that of Leibnitz, and had a grander character ;" persuasions, which of course, confirmed him in his resolution to examine it.

‘ How far Schiller penetrated into the arcana of transcendentalism, it is impossible for us to say. The metaphysical and logical branches of it seem to have afforded him no solid satisfaction, or taken no firm hold of his thoughts ; their influence is scarcely to be traced in any of his subsequent writings. The only department, to which he attached himself with his ordinary zeal, was that which relates to the principles of the imitative arts,

with their moral influences, and which in the Kantian nomenclature has been designated by the term *Æsthetics*, or the doctrine of sentiments and emotions. On these subjects he already had amassed a multitude of thoughts; to see which expressed by new symbols, and arranged in systematic form, and held together by some common theory, would necessarily yield enjoyment to his intellect, and inspire him with fresh alacrity in prosecuting such researches. The new light which dawned, or seemed to dawn, upon him, in the course of these investigations, is reflected in various treatises, evincing, at least, the honest diligence with which he studied, and the fertility with which he could produce. Of these, the largest and most elaborate are the essays on *Grace and Dignity*; on *Naïve and Sentimental Poetry*; and the *Letters on the Æsthetic Culture of Man*: the other pieces are on *Tragic Art*; on the *Pathetic*; on the *Cause of our Delight in Tragic Objects*; on *Employing the Low and Common in Art*.

‘Being cast in the mould of Kantism, or, at least, clothed in its garments, these productions, to readers unacquainted with that system, are encumbered here and there with difficulties greater than belong intrinsically to the subject. In perusing them, the uninitiated student is mortified at seeing so much powerful thought distorted, as he thinks, into such fantastic forms; the principles of reasoning, on which they rest, are apparently not those of common logic; dimness and doubt overhang their conclusions; scarcely any thing is proved in a convincing manner. But this is no strange quality in such writings. To an exoteric reader, the philosophy of Kant almost always appears to invert the common maxim: its end and aim seem not to be “to make abstruse things simple, but to make simple things abstruse.” Often a proposition of inscrutable and dread aspect, when resolutely grappled with, and torn from its shady den, and its bristling entrenchments of uncouth terminology, and dragged forth into the open light of day, to be seen by the natural eye, and tried by merely human understanding, proves to be a very harmless truth, familiar to us from of old, sometimes so familiar as to be a truism. Too frequently, the anxious novice is reminded of Dryden in the *Battle of the Books*: there is a helmet of rusty iron, dark, grim, gigantic; and within it, at the farthest corner, is a head no bigger than a walnut. These are the general errors of Kantian criticism: in the present works, they are by no means of the worst or most pervading kind; and there is a fundamental merit which does more than counterbalance them. By the aid of study, the doctrine set before us can, in general, at length be comprehended; and Schiller’s fine intellect, recognisa-

ble even in its masquerade, is ever and anon peering forth in its native form, which all may understand, which all must relish, and presenting us with passages, that show like bright verdant islands in the misty sea of metaphysics.

‘We have been compelled to offer these remarks on Kant’s Philosophy ; but it is right to add that they are the result of only very limited acquaintance with the subject. We cannot wish that any influence of ours should add a note, however feeble, to the loud and not at all melodious cry, which has been raised against it. When a class of doctrines, so involved in difficulties, yet so sanctioned by illustrious names, is set before us, curiosity must have a theory respecting them, and indolence and other humbler feelings are too ready to afford her one. To call Kant’s system a laborious dream, and its adherents, crazy mystics, is a brief method ; brief but false. The critic, whose philosophy includes the *craziness* of men like these, so easily and smoothly in its formulas, should render thanks to Heaven for having gifted him with science and acumen, such as few in any age or country have been gifted with. Meaner men, however, ought to recollect, that where we do not understand, we should postpone deciding, or, at least, keep our decision for our own exclusive benefit. We of England may reject this Kantian system, perhaps with reason ; but it ought to be on other grounds than are yet before us. Philosophy is science, and science, as Schiller has observed, cannot always be explained in “ conversations by the parlor fire,” or in written treatises that resemble them. The *cui bono* of these doctrines may not, it is true, be expressible by arithmetical computations ; the subject also is perplexed with obscurities, and probably, with manifold delusions ; and too often its interpreters with us have been like “ tenebrific stars,” that “ did ray out darkness” on a matter itself sufficiently dark. But what then ? Is the jewel always to be found among the common dust of the highway, and always to be estimated by its value in the common judgment ? It lies embosomed in the depths of the mine ; rocks must be rent before it can be reached ; skilful eyes and hands must separate it from the rubbish where it lies concealed, and kingly purchasers alone can prize it and buy it. This law of *ostracism* is as dangerous in science as it was of old in politics. Let us not forget that many things are true which cannot be demonstrated by the rules of *Watts’s Logic* ; that many truths are valuable, for which no price is given in Paternoster Row, and no preferment offered at St. Stephen’s. Whoever reads these treatises of Schiller with attention, will perceive that they depend on principles of an immensely higher and more complex character than our “ Essays on Taste,” and our “Inquiries con-

cerning the Freedom of the Will." The laws of criticism, which it is their purpose to establish, are derived from the inmost nature of man; the scheme of morality, which they inculcate, soars into a brighter region, very far beyond the ken of our "Utilities" and "Reflex-senses." They do not teach us "to judge of poetry and art as we judge of dinner," merely by observing the impressions it produced in us; and they *do* derive the duties and chief end of man from other grounds than the philosophy of Profit and Loss. These *Letters on Æsthetic Culture*, without the aid of any thing which the most skeptical could designate as superstition, trace out and attempt to sanction for us a system of morality, in which man, isolated on this fragment of the universe, encompassed with the boundless desolate Unknown, at war with Fate, without help or the hope of help, is confidently called upon to rise into a calm cloudless height of internal activity and peace, and *be*, what he has fondly named himself, the God of this lower world. When such are the results, who would not make an effort for the steps by which they are attained? In Schiller's treatises, it must be owned, the reader, after all exertions, will be fortunate if he can find them. Yet a second perusal will satisfy him better than the first; and among the shapeless immensities which fill the night of Kantism, and the meteoric coruscations, which perplex rather than enlighten him, he will fancy he descries some streaks of a serener radiance, which he will pray devoutly that time may purify and ripen into perfect day. The Philosophy of Kant is probably combined with errors to its very core; but perhaps also, this ponderous unmanageable dross may bear in it the everlasting gold of Truth! Mighty spirits have already labored in refining it: is it wise in us to take up with the base pewter of Utility, and renounce such projects altogether? We trust not.*

A few years after his establishment at Jena Schiller relaxed in his professional duties, and applied himself exclusively to critical and poetical studies. He gave up the *Thalia*, and commenced, in 1795, a new journal called the *Horen*. This event made a crisis in his life, for it was the occasion of his entering into intimate association with Goethe. He sent to Goethe his Prospectus, accompanied with a letter, inviting him to contribute to the *Horen*. Goethe readily accepted the in-

* 'Are our hopes from Mr. Coleridge always to be fruitless? Sneers at the common-sense philosophy of the Scotch are of little use; it is a poor philosophy, perhaps; but not so poor as none at all, which seems to be the state of matters here at present.'

vation in a warm and flattering answer. The correspondence, thus commenced, was continued with growing pleasure on both sides. An intimacy and friendship was formed, which ended only with Schiller's life. Often did the two friends pass weeks in each other's house. Their correspondence, comprising nearly a thousand letters, from 1794 to 1805, has recently been published in Germany, in six volumes, and is the most valuable contribution ever made in this shape to literature. It forms a counterpart, and at the same time a contrast, to the correspondence between Byron and Moore, published about the same time ; and if the one is the most entertaining epistolary series ever written, the other is the most instructive. The opinions and feelings of these two extraordinary men, on all the subjects and occasions that interested them, are here exhibited with the frankness of the most confiding friendship, and the fullness of mutual sympathy. Dissertations on principles of composition and art ; comments on contemporary writers and books ; discussions of plans of works ; notices of English, French, and Greek literature ; business communications relating to negotiations with booksellers and directors of theatres, to contributions for the *Horen* and *Almanac*, &c.;—such are the materials of these precious letters.* We shall make a few extracts from them, translating as literally as we can. The following is from Schiller's first letter to Goethe, after reading the conclusion of *Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship*, which Goethe had just finished and sent to him in manuscript.

‘Jena, the 2d July, 1796.

‘I have now gone through again, though rapidly, all the eight books of the novel, whereof the quantity alone is so great that it occupied me two days. Properly, therefore, I ought not to write about it to-day ; for the surprising and unparalleled variety that is, in the strictest sense, concealed in it, overwhelms me. I acknowledge that, as yet, although the *continuity* of it is clear to my mind, the *unity* is not : I doubt not, however, in the least, that it will be ; and indeed, in works of this class, continuity constitutes more than half of the unity.

‘As under these circumstances, you cannot expect from me any thing fully satisfactory, and yet desire to have something, you must be content with remarks put together without method, which, however, will not be entirely without value, inasmuch as

* As the Author of the ‘Life of Schiller’ makes no mention of them, we infer that they were published after his work was written.

they will give you my freshest impressions. A worthy and truly *æsthetic* estimate of the whole work, as a work of art, is a great undertaking. The coming four months I shall devote to it entirely, and with delight. Meanwhile, I account it the most fortunate incident of my existence that I have lived to see the completion of this work ; that this has taken place while my faculties are yet capable of improvement ; that I can yet draw from this pure spring : and the beautiful relation there is between us makes it a kind of religion with me, to feel towards what is yours as if it were my own, and so to purify and elevate my nature that my mind may be a clear mirror, and that I may thus deserve, in a higher sense, the name of your friend. How strongly have I felt on this occasion that the Excellent is a power ; that by selfish natures it can be felt but as a power ; and that only where there is disinterested love can it be enjoyed.

‘I cannot describe to you how deeply the truth, the beautiful vitality, the simple fullness of this work has affected me. The excitement into which it has thrown my mind will subside when I shall have perfectly mastered it, and that will be an important crisis in my being. This excitement is the effect of the Beautiful, and only of the Beautiful, and proceeds thence, that my intellect is not yet entirely in accordance with my feelings. I understand now perfectly what you mean when you say that it is strictly the Beautiful, the True, that can move you even to tears. Tranquil and deep, clear, and yet like nature unintelligible, is this work ; and all, even the most trivial collateral incident, shows the clearness, the equanimity, of the mind whence it flowed.

‘But I cannot yet give fit expression to my impressions, and shall therefore confine myself to the eighth book. How did you succeed in drawing together again so closely the large and widely separated circle and scene of action of persons and events ? The work is like a planetary system :—all is bound together, and the Italian personages,—like comets, and as fearfully as these,—unite the system to a more remote and a greater one. These personages too, as well as Marianna and Aurelia, run out of the system, and separate themselves from it as existences foreign to it, after they have served only to give to it a poetical movement. How beautifully conceived it is, to derive the *practically* monstrous, the fearfully pathetic, in the fate of Mignon and the Harper, from the *theoretically* monstrous, from the monstrous births of the understanding, so that nothing is thereby laid to the charge of pure and healthy Nature. Superstition alone gives birth to the horrid fates that pursue Mignon and the Harper. Even Aurelia is ruined only through her masculine character,—her unnaturalness.’

The rest of the letter consists of more detailed criticism. We add only the conclusion.

‘ And now adieu, my dear, my honored friend. How it moves me to think, that what we seek and scarcely find in the far distance of a favored antiquity, is to me present in you. Be surprised no longer that there are so few capable and worthy of understanding you. The wonderful naturalness, truth, and lightness of your descriptions precludes, in the herd of judges, all thought of the difficulty, the greatness of Art; and upon those who are able to understand the artist, who perceive the means with which he works, the genial power which they see in action operates with such a hostile, annihilating effect, compresses their barren self into so small a compass, that they angrily push the work from them,—yet in their hearts, though *de mauaise grace* they are your worshippers. SCHILLER.’

What generous devotion! What noble enthusiasm! The rich intellect and pure heart of Schiller are here beautifully exhibited. Of the man and the critic, we learn much from this single letter. Something else may be learnt from it:—some worthy men may be led to doubt the soundness of the judgment of *Wilhelm Meister*, which is adverse to that of Schiller; others, who habitually mistake the diminutive image formed by a great whole upon their own brain, for its perfect figure and proportions, may be brought to the conclusion, that there is more than they have discovered in a production which Schiller’s vast mind is thus stretched to compass and adequately admire, and if they cannot get insight, may learn modesty; and the literary prudes may take courage from the approbation of the lofty, pure-souled Schiller, and in reading certain portions of the work, be saved the effort of a blush.

The next extract we make, is a letter from Goethe, who was about to set out on a journey to Switzerland. Schiller had just left him, after a visit of a week.

‘ As a leave-taking, you could not have given me anything more agreeable and profitable than your visit of eight days. I am sure I do not deceive myself, when I look upon our being together as productive of good this time as it always is. So much has been developed for the present, and prepared for the future, that I shall set out with more contentment, inasmuch as I hope to do a good deal on the journey, and look forward on my return to your co-operation again. If we thus continue to execute different works simultaneously, and, while quietly pushing for-

ward the greater, entertain ourselves with the smaller, we shall be able to effect much.

‘I send you back the Polycrates. On Sunday I shall write you when I shall set off. Adieu : greet your dear wife for me. I wrote to-day to Schlegel.

‘Weimar, the 19th July, 1797.

GOETHE.’

Two days afterwards Schiller thus writes in answer.

‘Jena, the 21 July, 1797.

‘I can never part from you without something having been planted in me, and I rejoice, if in return for the much you give me, I can set you and your inward wealth in motion. Such a relation as ours, built on mutual improvement, must ever remain fresh and animated, and even gain in variety, the more harmonious it becomes, and the more contrariety of opinion between us disappears, which, with so many other persons, is all that prevents monotony. I think that by degrees we shall come to agree on every thing that can be referred to principles, and in regard to that which from its nature cannot be accounted for, we shall be near each other through feeling.’

One point on which they agree perfectly, is admiration, we may say, adoration of Shakspeare. Of him they do not speak as of other writers, but seem to look upon him as the consummate master of art,---the infallible oracle of nature ; his works, not as creations of a human mind, liable, as such, to error and exception, but as the direct products of nature, fantastic, it may be, even monstrous sometimes, but all instinct with the vital essence, which, itself inscrutable to man, places them beyond the reach of human condemnation. Schiller has translated Macbeth, and we can almost say, that the mighty original has lost nothing by putting on the garb of German words. In his dramas, the study of Shakspeare is often visible, though not in the shape of direct imitation, much less of plagiarism. In the following extract, we see the impression made on him by the historical plays. The letter is dated the 23th of November, 1797. We omit the first part of it.

‘I have just been reading the plays of Shakspeare which treat of the war between the two roses ; and now, after finishing *Richard the Third*, am filled with a real wonder. This is one of the sublimest of tragedies, and at this moment I cannot name even another of Shakspeare’s that is superior to it. The great destinies prepared in the preceding pieces are here accomplished after a truly great fashion, and according to the most sublime concep-

tion. That the subject excludes all that is feminine, tender, sentimental, aids very much the high effect : all in it is energetic and grand : nothing common disturbs the *æsthetic* emotion : one enjoys, as it were, the pure form of the dread-tragic. A high Nemesis presides over the piece, the consciousness of which penetrates the mind from the beginning to the end. To be wondered at is it, how the poet always succeeds in forcing the unpoetic matter to render up poetic booty ; and how skilfully he represents that which cannot be directly represented,—I refer to his art in using symbols where the reality cannot be exhibited. No play of Shakspeare reminds me so strongly of the Greek tragedy.

‘ It were really worth the trouble, to prepare this suite of eight pieces for our stage. An epoch might thereby be created. We must consult together about it.

‘ Adieu : my best wishes to our friend Meyer. My Wallenstein advances daily, and I am right well satisfied with it.

SCHILLER.’

Wallenstein was the beginning of a new series of dramas. Nearly ten years had elapsed since the publication of *Don Carlos*. Wallenstein, which consists of three parts, cost Schiller much labor, and two years of time. But the care and study bestowed on this work, besides making it his masterpiece, and the grandest poem of this age, facilitated greatly his subsequent dramatic labors. In quick succession followed *Mary Stuart*, *The Maid of Orleans*, *The Bride of Messina*, and his last, *William Tell*. For criticism on these beautiful dramas, we refer the reader to the work before us. Schiller died in the spring of 1805, being only forty-five years of age, in the vigor of his creative energies, his mind teeming with poetic plans. It is idle to regret his early death. Instead of thinking with disappointment on what he might yet have done, let us dwell on what he has done, and be joyful over the treasures which we through him possess. For himself, he died ‘calmly’ ; for the world, he has produced works, that will live forever to instruct, delight, and elevate mankind.

In conclusion, we strongly recommend this volume to the American public. It is worthy of its great subject. The selection of it, as the first of a series which he proposes to publish, gives promise, that Mr. Benjamin’s plan will be executed with a judgment proportioned to the enterprise with which it has been undertaken. This plan is, ‘to present from time to time to the public a book, similar in size and appearance to

the present volume, which shall be either an original work, a translation, or a republication.' Mr. Benjamin thus explains, in his 'general preface,' his design more fully.

'The great object in the publication of this series shall be freely to remunerate authors. If this object be encouraged, some good may be done, and some good works may be produced. If the subscriber could be, however remotely and humbly, the cause of exalting, by one volume, the literature of the age, he would feel amply rewarded. There will be those, who, with sagacious disbelief, will shake their heads on reading this preface; but the Editor, having some experience in literary matters, believes that the popular rage for temporary publications is declining, and that, with the improvement of taste, a demand for good literature is rising. The vulgar prejudice against literary men is also going out. It is no longer thought, that the man of toil, with no capital but his strength, whose "employment increases his capacity of action," deserves higher remuneration than the man of letters, who, while his mind is stored with the learning of years, is weakened by his mental labor in those physical powers, on which others confidently depend for a subsistence. Furthermore, it is believed that authorship will soon become a distinct profession in this country as it is in Europe,—and that an author will be as readily paid for his book, as a physician for his advice, a lawyer for his pleading, or a clergyman for his sermon. Necessity should not be the plea of any author. Literary men should never write gratuitously; for, however well some can afford to give away their time and talents, they should reflect that by so doing they injure others, and depreciate the value of their labor. Should there be only two or three original works published in this series, for which the proprietor would be enabled to extend a liberal compensation to authors, the cause of good literature must be in some degree advanced. It affords me gratification to state the hopeful progress of a work, intended for this series, by an author, whose well-earned fame will, on its appearance, be greatly increased, and who will be the first to lift my project to an elevation on which it will be my pride to see it placed.

'When I cannot procure original pictures for my gallery, I must be content to display copies of the first masters. The republications and translations will be edited by men reported to be most capable of the task. If I meet with a tithe of the kindness hereafter, which it has been my good fortune to experience in connexion with the present volume, I shall apprehend no difficulty, but anticipate a pleasure in my applications. I may not add

my name, humble as it is, to these remarks, which, for their meritorious brevity and business-like style, should rather be called a Prospectus than a Preface, without fully expressing my sense of gratitude to the learned Professor, who so lately delighted a large audience by his lectures on the works of Schiller, and who has now adorned this best account of the great Poet's life, by observations not less interesting than the work itself.'

Here is a liberal estimate of what is due to literary labor. Highly gratifying must it be to all who appreciate the vocation of the man of letters, and desire to see it honored and rewarded among us, to witness such a spirit manifested in practice.

ART. II.—*The Philosophy of History.*

Cours d'Histoire Moderne, par M. GUIZOT, Professeur d'Histoire à la Faculté des Lettres de Paris. Paris. 1829.

WE propose in the present article to throw together some remarks upon the nature and importance of historical science, and also a few hints upon its study,—a subject which few deny to be of the last importance, but which has not always received the full attention that it deserves; so true is the observation, that we pass over many things, only because they are near and obvious and of especial moment, almost 'to fly to others which we know not of,' and which, when known, hardly reward us for our toil. We need offer no apology to our readers, for this recurrence to history; for whether we consider its great end,—the making us better and more valuable members of society,—or its particular excellence as a school of eloquence and philosophy, we shall not fail in either case to assign it a high and noble rank among the studies which influence the designs of men.

Lord Bacon admits three kinds in his classification of civil history; namely, civil proper, ecclesiastical and literary; the first of which he divides into pure and mixed. As a consideration of all these different branches and off-shoots would lead us far beyond the limits proper for an article of this kind, and that without being attended with any beneficial result, we shall confine ourselves to the subdivision which he styles